

# The Sword AND Staff

*"Preach the Word" (II Timothy 4:2) • "Feed the Flock" (I Peter 5:2)*

## ADULTERY

**Question:** What is adultery?

**I. THE BASIC MEANING** (Matthew 5:27; Exodus 20:14; John 8:1-4)

**II. ADULTERY IN THE HEART** (Matthew 5:28-30; Mark 7:21,22)

**III. ADULTERY IN DIVORCE AND REMARRIAGE** (Matthew 5:31,32; 19:3-9; Romans 7:2,3)

**IV. SPIRITUAL ADULTERY** (II Corinthians 11:2; James 4:4; Matthew 12:39; Judges 2:17)

**Conclusion:** Proverbs 5:15-21; Hebrews 13:4; I Corinthians 5:9,10; Revelation 21:8

**N**EWs OF ADULTERY in the lives of public officials, royalty and private citizens is not uncommon today. Is there not another John the Baptist to speak up? Jesus spoke of a "wicked and an adulterous generation." In concepts and lifestyle it seems that many have lost their way. Therefore, we present

the above Scripture for sober consideration. Do not ask us for all the implications and ramifications. We do not have all of the answers. All we know is what is written. How we need to believe and practice the standards of morality that God has laid out for us. He alone determines what is right and wrong.—*J. E. Gibbons*   □

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—THANK YOU—

## Proverbially **SPEAKING..**

*A MAN lost in his work has really found himself.*

Without faith and love what we do has no true spiritual significance (Hebrews 11:6; I Corinthians 13:1-3).

*If God doesn't have first place in your life, God is not in your life.*

Peace comes not so much from the absence of trouble in our lives as from the presence of God.

*Not the least of the benefits of honest labor is sleep that is sound and sweet.*

The man who practices what he would preach has already preached the best sermon he will ever preach.

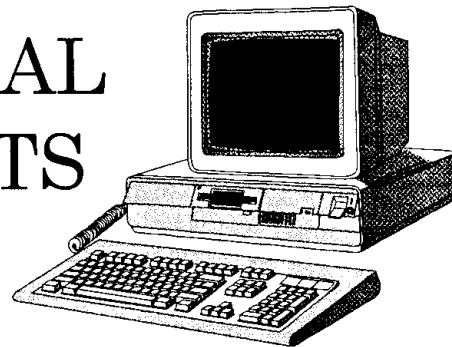
*It is best to not talk unless you have something to say.*

A heart warmed by the gospel of Christ will not be cold and indifferent toward others.

*We need true religion, not only to make us godly people, but to keep us from being animals.*

Christianity sanctifies all legitimate human bonds and makes them even stronger (if those in the said bonds are truly bound together in Christ).

# EDITORIAL COMMENTS



## UNITY, GOD'S KIND AND GOD'S WAY

**T**HE AMERICAN humorist Will Rogers reportedly said, "The more you read about politics, the more you got to admit that each party is worse than the other." On the contemporary scene, one political party has stood for the homosexual agenda (although they are not above modifying their position for political gain) and the killing of unborn babies (abortion). Not to be outdone, and hoping to likewise gain votes, some in another political party speak of the "big tent" where people holding such views, as well as opposing ones, may all be together. Both try to project the concept of unity in diversity which probably comes over well in our pluralistic society with its fuzzy, tolerating, and compromising mentality. Many have been brainwashed into believing that to be otherwise is to be "mean-spirited." To be for the only thing that marriage means in God's sight (Matthew 19:4-6), and to be against homosexual perversion, is to be mean and promoting hate.

How reminiscent and suggestive this is of the religious unity espoused in these modern times as seen in the Ecumenical Movement in the denominational world (and any other movement that would downgrade good, solid Bible convictions to accomplish unity). It is inexcusable to say that we are all "erring brothers" and therefore should be together. That is not the issue. The apostle Paul stated long ago, "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). (If grace and cleansing have been received, we are now not to willfully continue in sin—Romans 6:1,2). The problem is that when belief and shades of belief and unbelief are mixed together (including doctrines of the Bible and traditions of men), the results are disastrous. The homogenizing effect is to break down belief and blend it with unbelief (to blend truth with error). When we sacrifice good Bible convictions upon the altar of so-called "Christian unity," the results will not be Christian, nor is it the unity taught in the Bible. As someone has said, it is all right for the ship to be in the water, but it's anything but right for the water to be in the ship. Yes, there is something worse than religious division, and that is religious compromise and

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# A Solemn Reminder



Eternal and Spiritual Things  
Are What Really Matter

# EDITORIAL COMMENTS

*(Continued from Page 2)*

apostasy. Human nature is such that when convictions are lost, they are not easily regained. They are usually lost forever.

If we really wanted to be united, it must be the unity taught in the Scriptures, and it is not a denominational one. It does not consist of “leaders” of denominational groups meeting and figuring out how to come together (and then compromising to bring it about). It does not consist of loyalty and support of denominational conventions, organizations, and agencies (although some have this mentality, that a person is not practicing unity unless he goes along with such). Really, the unity taught in the Scriptures is a spiritual one and undenominational in nature. It is a byproduct of being united with Christ in baptism, and thereby being united with everyone else who has been united with Christ. In coming to Christ a person is “baptized into one body” (I Corinthians 12:13) and “called in one body” (Colossians 3:15). Even as Paul said, we have all been reconciled “unto God in one body by the cross” (Ephesians 2:16; notice verses 12-22 of this chapter). That being the case we have been reconciled, not only to God, but to everyone else who has been reconciled to God; we have been made one with them. The unity taught in the New Testament is a spiritual unity.

Then in Ephesians 4:3 Paul further admonishes that we are to “keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.” The initial unity was produced when we became Christians; now we are to keep and maintain this unity (unity with God and fellow Christians). This is done by us personally as individuals and in the context of the local church. Spiritually speaking, Christ has only one body in the world (his church). Organizationally speaking, that one body is made up of local, independent and autonomous churches. They are not organized as denominations beyond the local church level with external organizations and agencies that command their allegiance. They are not considered as one bloc of “churches” as opposed to another bloc of “churches.” To have that mentality is to have a denominational mindset, thinking in terms of “us” and “them.” If we are “in Christ” (Galatians 3:27; II Corinthians 5:17; Romans 8:1), we are already one and should think and act accordingly. Think in terms of oneness, and not division.

The unity that we are to keep and maintain after becoming one in Christ is accented by the verses that follow in Ephesians 4 (verses 3-6). “Endeavour-

ing to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism, One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all” (Ephesians 4:3-6). Certainly God’s plan calls for oneness, and to deviate from this is to deviate from His will. We are not being arrogant or self-righteous when we say that we must all belong to the one church found in the Scriptures. There is no more one church than there is more than one God or one Christ. By our denominational divisions we are the ones out of kilter, not God.

The word “denomination” signifies a dividing off and naming. It incorporates all of the distinctive man-made names, doctrines, traditions, organizations, and peculiarities that set one religious group apart from another. And in particular it signifies all of these man-made distinctions in contrast with the church in the New Testament, which is not a denomination. To follow the New Testament and that alone is to result in being one with the church of the New Testament (and one with everyone else who is doing the same thing). If all of the religious bodies of the world would come together to form one body, but still hold to the doctrines and traditions of men, their “unity” would be no more what God wanted than before they came together. They would not be practicing the unity of the Scriptures, and they would still be a denomination. Whereas conceivably if there was but one local church in the whole wide world following the New Testament (and that alone), and it refused to be united with those who didn’t, they would nonetheless be practicing the unity taught in the New Testament.

Yes, the unity taught in the New Testament is a spiritual unity as we are spiritually united with Christ and consequently united with everyone else who is united with Christ. We are one in Christ. The corporate unity of the church is realized only in the context of the local church as we follow the Scriptures, growing in the grace and knowledge of the Lord. This is the unity we are commanded to keep. We are commanded to love the brotherhood at large (I Peter 2:17), not organize it. To appeal for corporate unity beyond the bounds of the local church (setting up conventions, organizations, and agencies) is to be denominational and have a denominational mindset. As we look to the Scriptures, and to the local autonomous church, let us practice the kind of unity taught in the New Testament. □

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“Love One Another”

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*A Series Involving the Bible and Prophecy...*



## Prophecy: Literal or Figurative?

● By **DAVID VAUGHN ELLIOTT**

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**D**OES THE BIBLE mean what it says? Should we take it at face value? Should we interpret it literally? Or, should we understand it figuratively? Few questions are more important for the study of Bible prophecy.

### **Not "Either-Or"**

Is the Bible history, or poetry? Both! Do Bible laws apply to us today, or not? Both! Does the Bible contain the word of God, or the word of the devil? Both! (Not sound right? See Luke 4:6.) Is the Bible easy to understand, or hard? Both!

Many things in life cannot be forced into an "either-or" situation. So it is with Bible interpretation. Should we understand Bible prophecy literally or figuratively? The answer can be given in one word: *both!*

### **Much of the Bible is Literal**

The Bible is a book of real people. Many of them are known to secular history: Ahab, Jehu, Hezekiah, Nebuchadnezzar, Pontius Pilate, the Herods, Caesar Augustus, John the Baptist, James the Lord's brother, to name a few.

The Bible is a book of real places. It tells of Babylon, Egypt, Samaria, Syria, Edom, Rome, and more. It takes us to the Euphrates and Jordan Rivers, the Red Sea and the Sea of Galilee.

Real people in real places: a true, literal history of God's dealings with mankind. Since the Bible is solidly set in history, Bible interpretation should begin with the literal meaning.

Many prophecies of the Bible are likewise to be literally understood. When Abraham's visitors told him that Sarah would shortly have a son, Sarah laughed. She laughed because it was impossible; she was past menopause. But with God all things are possible. He fulfilled it literally (Genesis 18:9-15; 21:1-7).

God foretold that if the children of Israel disobeyed him, they would experience miserable sieges of their cities. They would go to the extreme of eating their own children! That was literally fulfilled (Deuteronomy 28:45-57; 2 Kings 6:24-29).

Centuries before Christ, Isaiah prophesied that a voice would one day cry out in a wilderness. Such was the unusual literal location of John the Baptist's ministry (Isaiah 40:3; Matthew 3:1-5). Zechariah prophesied that the King of the Jews would enter Jerusalem on a donkey. It was literally fulfilled (Zechariah 9:9; John 12:12-16).

Bible prophecy, like other portions of the Bible, should often be understood literally.

### **Much of the Bible is Figurative**

The problem among Bible believers today is not if we should understand much of the Bible literally. Believers accept that. But some talk as if *all* the Bible should be taken literally. However, it takes little Bible reading to discover figurative language.

For a quick start, consider Jesus' parables. The sower, the net, the ten virgins, the vineyard, the pearl of great price. Who can doubt that they must all be interpreted figuratively?

The Psalms declare that God is our rock, our shield, our fortress. Who does not understand that these are figures of speech? Paul said: "I fed you with milk and not with solid food." "I planted, Apollos watered." No one believes that Paul was literally a nursemaid or a farmer.

The real question is not whether the Bible—and its prophecy—should be taken literally or figuratively. The question is *how much* is literal and *how much* is figurative. The question for the believer is not whether or not we should start with the literal. We should! The question is this: *How can we tell when certain words, phrases or verses are to be understood figuratively?*

### **COMMON SENSE**

Why not start with every-day-common sense? Daily conversation is filled with figurative language. Dad says, "You kids quit raising the roof." What do you think would happen to the youngster who replied, "Dad, come take a look. The roof hasn't been raised one inch"?

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## Prophecy: Literal or Figurative?

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"I'm up to my neck in debt." "Don't be a pig." "We were flying down the highway." "I had butterflies in my stomach." Common sense. No one has to explain these figures to anyone—except to a small child. Ever notice how often small children are confused because grown-ups speak figuratively and the child takes it literally? But as children grow up, they catch on.

What is "common sense," anyway? It's the sense you would expect common folk to have. A person of normal intelligence. A person with a reasonable amount of knowledge about life.

Then, what is "common sense" in relation to literal and figurative language? Take "raising the roof," for example. A person of common intelligence and experience knows that kids can not lift a roof by yelling. It is impossible. Therefore, the expression must be figurative. When words, taken literally, involve self-contradiction, absurdity or unreality, then it is time to consider a figurative meaning.

### Common Sense and the Bible

Jesus spoke of two men, one with a speck in his eye, the other with a plank in his eye. But it is not literally possible to have a plank in the eye. Conclusion? Jesus was speaking figuratively.

"If your right eye causes you to sin, pluck it out," Jesus said (Matthew 5:29). Ever hear of anybody who sinned with just one eye? "I'll cover my left eye and lust on this woman with just my right eye." Absurd? Yes. It must be figurative language.

God's first command to man included figurative speech. God said of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, "in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die" (Genesis 2:17). However, Adam and Eve did not literally die the day they ate. Since God does not lie, we are forced to consider a figurative interpretation.

### Common Sense and Prophecy

Turning to prophecy, it is important to note that *nobody* interprets *all* prophecy literally, not even the very people who claim it is all literal. Common sense is part of the reason.

Everybody agrees that the beasts of Revelation 13 and 17 are symbolic. With a big imagination, *maybe* a literal beast could have seven heads (13:1) and maybe even talk (13:5). But no adult imagination is big enough to accept 13:7 as referring to a literal beast. "It was granted to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them. And authority was given him over every tribe, tongue, and nation." Imagination fails. Common sense says the beasts represent some human power(s).

Prophecies often mention stars. For example, Revelation 6:13 says, "And the stars of heaven fell to the earth, as a fig tree drops its late figs when it is shaken by a mighty wind." In verses 15 and 16, the earth and its people still exist. This is literally impossible. Stars are huge. If just one star collided with the earth, the earth would be obliterated but the star hardly affected. Thus, the student must look for a figurative explanation.

Common sense, of course, has its limits. It can often tell us something is not literal; but by itself it may not explain the figurative meaning.

### THE BIBLE TELLS ME SO

"Jesus loves me this I know, For the Bible tells me so." In like manner, many times we can say, "The text is figurative this I know, for the Bible tells me so." What surer ground than to let the Bible interpret itself!

#### Simile: "Like," "As"

Formal language classes sometimes explore *figures of speech*. Some of the examples already given are called "metaphors." In a metaphor something is said to be something else. It was more forceful for Jesus to say, "I am the door," than to say "I am like a door." This latter figure of speech is a "simile." A simile uses "like" and "as." To recognize a metaphor, one must use common sense. The simile, on the other hand, plainly declares itself to be a figure of speech.

Genesis 22:17: "I will multiply your descendants as the stars of the heaven and as the sand which is on the seashore." As the stars; as the sand. Matthew 23:27 reads: "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs which indeed appear beautiful outwardly,

## Another "So Stupid"

*(See Article on Page 12)*

IT HAPPENED in Baltimore the first part of the second week of October. Some actors were rehearsing a street scene for their TV movie which involved an arrest, policemen with drawn guns and all. A fleeing shoplifter, who was being pursued, happened to run right into their midst. "Oh, no," he was heard to say as he dropped what he was carrying—about \$100 worth of Polaroid film, police said. He then raised his hands and stood there. Of course the actors were not real life policemen, but moments later the real ones arrived and arrested the man on the spot. Someone was heard to say, "If he's convicted, the judge should drop the theft charge and send him away for being stupid." Sometimes sinners can do things that are so stupid and dumb that it is almost hilarious. □

but inside are full of dead men's bones." *Like* whitewashed tombs.

Another figure of speech, the parable, may be defined as an "extended simile." "The kingdom of heaven is *like*..." The entire account that follows "like" is figurative language.

**Interpretation Given**

Often the Bible does more than simply say that certain language is figurative. It interprets the figure. Parables are like that. Some are only identified as parables, leaving it to the disciple to discern the meaning. In other cases, the meaning of the various figures is explained.

Matthew 13:37-38: "He answered and said to them: 'He who sows the good seed is the Son of Man. The field is the world, the good seeds are the sons of the kingdom, but the tares are the sons of the wicked one'."

God's first command to man includes a figure (Genesis 2:17); but the figure is not explained. The New Testament provides insight. "Let the dead bury their own dead" (Matthew 8:22). Common sense says the first "dead" is figurative; the second, literal. Ephesians 2:1-3 explains this figurative death: "dead in trespasses and sins...fulfilling the desires of the flesh." Dead while living! *Dead in sin*. With such insight, it is easy to conclude that Adam and Eve died *spiritually* on the day they ate.

Revelation opens with a vision of Christ. He is standing amidst seven lampstands and has seven stars in his hand. Literal or figurative? He himself answers in 1:20: "The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands which you saw are the seven churches." The identity of these "angels" is not clear, but there is no question about the seven churches. They are identified in 1:11. The Bible has explained the figure.

**THE BIBLE  
EXPLAINS PROPHETIC FIGURES**

Figurative prophecy does not begin in Revelation. It begins in *Genesis*! Pharaoh had a dream that he did not understand. He summoned Joseph, who explained: "God has shown Pharaoh what He is about to do: The seven good cows are seven years...And the seven thin and ugly cows which came up after them are seven years, and the seven empty heads blighted by the east wind are seven years of famine" (Genesis 41:25-27). Prophecy in figurative language in the first book of the Bible.

Common sense says that beasts in prophecy are figurative. But of what? An example is found in Daniel 8:20,21: "The ram which you saw, having the two horns—they are the kings of Media and Persia.

And the male goat is the kingdom of Greece." Prophecy in figurative language. The Bible says so.

One time in the temple, Jesus foretold his resurrection. The Jews totally missed it. They thought He was speaking literally. John 2:19-21 explains: "Jesus answered and said to them, 'Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.' Then the Jews said, 'It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will You raise it up in three days?' But He was speaking of the temple of His body." This prophecy was *not* to be literally fulfilled as the Jews supposed. Jesus spoke of "this temple" in a figurative sense. The Bible says so.

On the day of Pentecost, Peter explains a prophecy which in part is figurative. He quotes Psalms 16 where David is speaking: "I...my...me." To be literally fulfilled, it would have to refer to David himself. Rather, Peter carefully shows that David was *not* speaking of himself, but rather of Jesus, his physical descendent (Acts 2:25-32). The prophecy seems to be literally speaking of David; however, it is figuratively speaking of Jesus. Peter explains and proves the figure.

**"Stars" as Important People**

Common sense has shown that stars in prophecy are, at least sometimes, figurative. But of what? All the way back in Genesis, Joseph's prophetic dreams included stars. His father, Jacob, clearly understood that the eleven stars were not literal, but rather symbolized Joseph's eleven brothers (Genesis 37:9,10).

The stars in Revelation 1:16,20 have already been seen to be angels (messengers). Whether they be heavenly angels or human messengers, the stars are living beings, as in Genesis. This figurative use of stars in the Bible agrees with the usage in daily life. We speak of movie stars and stars in sports—real people.

**The Prophecy Concerning Elijah**

Four hundred years before Christ, the Old Testament closes thus: "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord. And he will turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers, lest I come and strike the earth with a curse" (Malachi 4:5,6).

Elijah is coming! Is this supposed to have a literal fulfillment—Elijah *himself* is coming? Or is this to be understood figuratively (symbolically, spiritually)—someone *like* Elijah is coming? There is nothing in the context to indicate one way or the other. Therefore, we might assume it is literal, unless—*unless*—God clearly tells us otherwise.

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# Prophecy: Literal or Figurative?

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Matthew 17:10-13 is a key text: "And His disciples asked Him, saying, 'Why then do the scribes say that Elijah must come first?' Then Jesus answered and said to them, 'Elijah truly is coming first and will restore all things. But I say to you that **Elijah has come already**, and they did not know him but did to him whatever they wished'...Then the disciples understood that He spoke to them of John the Baptist."

John the Baptist was Elijah. Not literally, of course (see John 1:21), but spiritually. Gabriel told Zacharias that John the Baptist "will also go before Him **in the spirit and power of Elijah**, 'to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children' " (Luke 1:17). The last expression is a direct quotation of the Malachi prophecy. So Gabriel is saying that John the Baptist is the fulfillment of the Elijah prophecy. Gabriel and Jesus agree: the prophecy was *not* fulfilled literally. It was fulfilled figuratively (spiritually). "The Bible tells me so."

## Jesus' Kingdom

It is a well-known fact that the Jews of Jesus' day were awaiting the fulfillment of numerous Old Testament prophecies regarding the King and his Kingdom. It is also well known that they were expecting a literal, physical kingdom.

If Jesus had in mind setting up a literal kingdom, there was no better time than after the feeding of the 5,000. The Jews were so stirred up that "they were about to come and take Him by force to make Him king" (John 6:15). Far from seizing the opportunity, Jesus "departed again to a mountain by Himself alone." When the crowds found Him the next day, He preached a powerful sermon, contrasting the physical with the spiritual (6:26-65). The net result? "From that time many of His disciples went back and walked with Him no more." From what time? From the time Jesus refused to become a literal, physical king. From the time He declared to the multitudes the superiority of the spiritual over the physical.

Over and again, Jesus declared "The Kingdom of Heaven is like..." and followed with a parable that in no way relates to a literal, physical kingdom. Rather, these parables tell of such things as the seed, which is the Word of God, and the net gathering fish, which is the final day of judgment.

Before He was crucified, Jesus made it clear to Pilate: "My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, My servants would fight, so that I should not be delivered to the Jews"

(John 18:36). The Son of David would not have a kingdom like David. David fought for a physical kingdom. He slaughtered Goliath; he conquered Jerusalem from the Jebusites; he greatly extended his earthly domains. But Jesus would not take up arms either to save his own life or rescue Jerusalem from the Romans. "My kingdom is not of this world."

Jesus *did* come to fulfill the kingdom prophecies. Listen to his words: "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel" (Mark 1:15). Since the time was fulfilled and the kingdom was at hand, of necessity it had to

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# BIBLE QUESTIONS

*(Random Questions Over the Bible)*

1. What were the names of the three sons of Noah through whom the earth was populated again after the flood?
2. How old was Abraham when he was circumcised?
3. What man in the Bible was the father of sons from whom the Moabite and Ammonite people descended?
4. The life of Moses can be divided into what three equal periods of time?
5. Who were the first three kings of Israel during the period of the united kingdom?
6. In the Bible what is the Dead Sea called?
7. In the Bible what is the Mediterranean Sea called?
8. In the Bible what other names is the Sea of Galilee called?
9. What man in the Bible was able to go forty days and forty nights on the strength gotten from one meal?
10. What kind of person does the writer of Proverbs say to "make no friendship with"?
11. Why did the writer in the book of Proverbs not want to be poor or rich?
12. Of the four gospel writers, which is the only one who speaks of Jerusalem as a "holy city"?
13. How old was Jesus when he was baptized and entered his public ministry?
14. According to the record, to whom did Jesus appear first after his resurrection from the dead?
15. Which disciple outran Peter to the tomb of Jesus when they learned his body was missing?
16. At various times over how many days after his resurrection did Jesus show himself alive before his ascension into heaven?
17. In the early days of the church who is the first person mentioned as performing miracles besides the apostles?
18. When Stephen stood before the Great Council of the Jews, what is noted about his appearance before he makes his defense?
19. How many people were in the ship on which Paul was being taken prisoner to Rome that shipwrecked (and how many lives were lost)?
20. How had Paul learned about the church situation at Corinth that prompted him to write I Corinthians?

**(NOTE: Answers found elsewhere in this issue of the paper)**

# READERS'

## ...Response

**APOLOGY:** Please accept our humble apology for slowness in getting correspondence answered. "We" have no staff of secretaries, etc. to handle such, and this is done by the "editor" as time allows. Be it known that you are sincerely appreciated. □

### FLORIDA:

■ "Please take us off your mailing list."

■ "...I appreciate *THE SWORD AND STAFF* because I love the truth."

### SOUTH CAROLINA:

■ "So sorry to hear of your sickness—Hope you are better by now. My wife and I have been praying for you. We appreciate the paper very much."

### MARYLAND:

■ "I just wanted to send a BIG Thank You for your faithfulness in sending *THE SWORD AND STAFF*. It is a joy to receive and such a blessing to read! Every issue is filled with the Gospel and Love of Jesus. There is plenty of spiritual nourishment...I am very thankful to be on your mailing list.

"I do pray you are feeling better. May the Lord strengthen, encourage, and uplift as you continue to spread His Saving Word. *THE SWORD AND STAFF* has been in our family for years. As a small child I can remember going to bring in the mail and finding it. Mother told us to read and study it because it contained Wisdom and Truth based on God's Holy Word. She still receives *THE SWORD AND STAFF* also. We would both really miss it, if you were to ever be unable to publish. I pray someone would be able to continue the great work you are doing for the Lord...

"Please continue to share *THE SWORD AND STAFF* with us. Thank you."

### PENNSYLVANIA:

■ "I am enclosing a check to help you with the finances of publishing *THE SWORD AND STAFF*. The articles

are very helpful in trying to keep faithful. We really do need each other's encouragement to walk this road of faith as Jesus would want us to do.

"I am a Christian, and I want to learn more of Him and His will. I want to go to heaven when I die and so do many others. I know there is only one way and that's to worship Him in the way He says.

"Would you please send me a copy of *POEMS OF THE SOUL AND PROVERBS*?

"God bless you and keep you in His care."

■ "Thank God your physical report sounds favorable. God is good and we are so thankful He is in control. I thank God that He has spared you for to do this great work you have begun. I do pray He will bless you and strengthen you to carry on for a long time yet. I do enjoy *THE SWORD AND STAFF*. I have only five bound volumes which I read over and over, and I find there is much food for thought...

"These truly are the days of falling away and compromise. Pray for me to be found faithful to my calling. Here is a small donation to use as you see fit. Let me know when the next volumes of *THE SWORD AND STAFF* are ready. I want to get them."

### OHIO:

■ "...Thank you for the reading and study material found in *THE SWORD AND STAFF* this past year. When I think of or read II Timothy 2:15, I always am reminded of you.

"May God continue to bless you and your spreading the gospel of Jesus Christ without compromise."

■ "...I have been so thankful for you—your publications are so true to His Word, the best I've ever read... Your *SWORD AND STAFF* I've passed on to one of our men in our church—also some of the shorter leaflet articles. He has been so thankful that I introduced you to him; many others feel the same...

"Thank you so much—I don't have the words to tell you how much I have enjoyed your paper. Keep well, and God bless you and yours in the excellent work you are doing."

■ "I am a young believer who is interested in learning more about the way, the truth, and the life. For many years I believed the myth that all that one must do to be worthy of heaven was to be a good person. Finally (I'm slow to learn), I realized that we as Christians are to give our entire lives to Christ.

"Also, until recently I never knew that denominations were wrong on many of their doctrines. In fact, it was not until this summer that...started teaching me the truth (i.e. the history and beginnings of many denominations). Also, he taught me what's wrong with the faith only belief (i.e. asking Jesus into your heart). I'm glad I learned these things but now the world is not such a nice place anymore. Many people whom I

(Continued on Next Page)

# READERS'...Response

(Continued from Previous Page)

thought were 100% Bible based Christians are denominational and faith only. It really makes me sad, mad, and upset to see how far off so many people are. I have a group of friends who I got to know real well at college last year and now after learning about primitive Christianity I realize that I wasn't part of a group that is good as I thought it was. Trouble is, they truly think they are following the Bible 100%, and some of them are quite learned and zealous.

"They believe in:

- [Calvinistic] predestination
- faith only
- gifts of the Spirit
- they don't practice the Lord's supper every Lord's day.

"I'm writing you because I've been told THE SWORD AND STAFF is good and true. I desire to learn and to show others the truth. May I please have one copy of each of your past year's bound volumes and a copy of the POEMS OF THE SOUL AND PROVERBS; please put me on your mailing list.

"Thank you..."

## MISSOURI:

■ "Someone sent our name in to THE SWORD AND STAFF. We have been getting it since 1957. What a Great Publication."

(Editor's Note: This date, 1957, was when the paper was started years ago. It would be interesting to hear from others who have received THE SWORD AND STAFF over the years from the very beginning.)

## KANSAS:

■ "...Keep up the good work you are doing for the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. THE SWORD AND STAFF tells it like it is. Praise God for men like you."

## COLORADO:

■ "Thank you for sending us THE SWORD AND STAFF. We have been disappointed in the compromise of so many publications, and it is very encouraging to find THE SWORD AND STAFF is still holding the standards of holiness and truth we need so badly..."

## OREGON:

■ "Your publication is the most Scripturally dependable one we can find. We hope things are going well with you...Please keep up the 'good fight'—you are needed."

## CHILE:

■ "Let me start by greeting you and hoping that you are fine, and full of blessings from our Lord Jesus Christ.

"The purpose of this letter is to ask a big favor: could you send me a large quantity of back copies of the paper: LA ESPADA Y EL CAYADO [THE SWORD

AND STAFF] since it contains very excellent articles, and they help a lot to understand Biblical topics; also the teaching that one receives is marvelous. Above all that has been said, we beg you, please SEND US A LARGE QUANTITY OF BACK COPIES OF: LA ESPADA Y EL CAYADO, and if possible send me the bound volumes, since we need them a lot. Therefore, I beg you to help us in what has been asked for, and send them soon please.

"I am already very thankful. Greetings with much love in Christ." (translated from Spanish)

## AUSTRALIA:

■ "Really enjoy your paper. It is a refreshing change to the humanism of university and the shallowness of 'mainstream religion'."

USA, GLOBAL (E-mail):

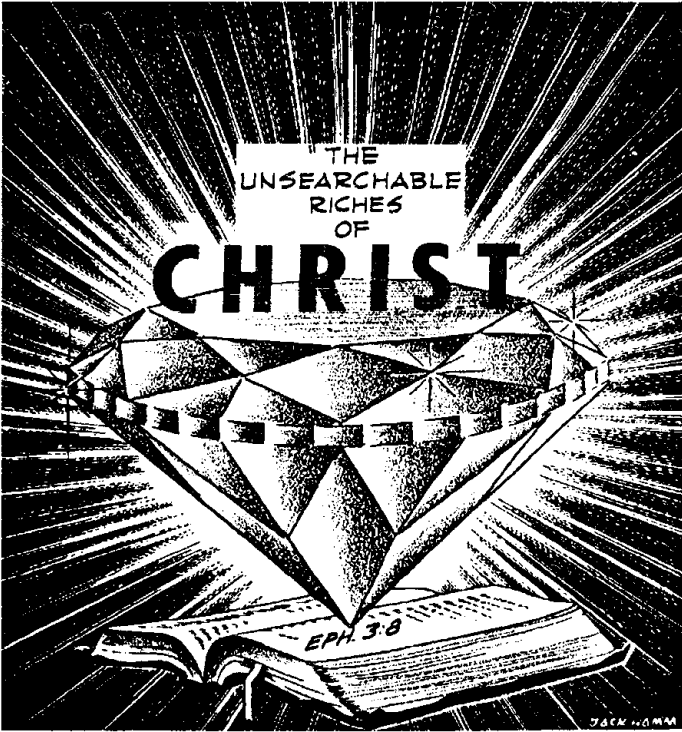
► "English is, of course, not my native tongue, but I enjoy reading spiritual articles that keep me closer to the Lord. I realize I am far behind in my contribution toward THE SWORD AND STAFF, so under separate cover I am going to mail you a small token of my appreciation for your tremendous ministry. About twelve years ago we moved from Tokyo to this area...It is a mountainous rural community openly still hostile to the Christian gospel. For the past twelve years we have been wondering/trying how best we can go into the hearts of the self-secluding community of several hundred years of history. Now we feel we will soon see a baptism...At times my wife and I alone partake of the Lord's table on Sundays, and at times several 'Christians' of different denominations come to our worship service on Sunday morning. They are originally from big cities and are now trying to settle down in rural communities around here in the mountains. They found us meeting on Sunday, so started coming to worship together. I try to help them worship and follow Him according to the Scriptures and nothing else. For them it is a great shock to find a small congregation not bound by human creeds or traditions or denominational ties or structures at first, but gradually as they continue to come to worship the Lord together with us they began to realize the importance of following the simple teachings of the Scriptures and to appreciate the simple New Testament Church pattern and fellowship. There aren't any Protestant churches around here in the mountains, and they have no choice but to come and worship with us. It is wonderful to see them slowly growing in knowledge...I appreciate your ministry through THE SWORD AND STAFF. It uplifts my thirsty soul always. Thank you. May God bless you.

"Writing to you in English is sort of torture, but I must thank God for this modern strange electronic box through which I can send this Christian greetings at once."



# Prophecy: Literal or Figurative?

(Continued from Page 8)



be set up soon after Jesus spoke. However, all agree that no physical kingdom was set up in the first century. A spiritual kingdom, however, *was* set up!

Thus the King and Kingdom prophecies of the Old Testament must not be interpreted literally. Rather, they must be interpreted figuratively. It is a spiritual Kingdom with a spiritual message, a spiritual King and a spiritual hope.

### Looking for Figurative Keys

There is no escaping the conclusion: many Bible prophecies must be interpreted figuratively, symbolically, spiritually. Indeed, all these examples should alert us to the need to always consider the possibility of a figurative interpretation. When the Bible clearly declares a figure, it *may* be a key to open up the understanding of other prophecies.

In some prophecies, for example, stars *must* be interpreted figuratively, either by the rule of common sense or because the Bible tells us so. In other prophecies there may be a doubt. What then? The Bible sometimes shows stars to be important people. This can become a key. It can alert us to the possibility that unexplained stars in other prophecies may be important people.

A caution must be expressed about such “keys” to interpreting prophecy. It is just like keys to a literal lock: if the key fits—if it helps to make sense out of the prophecy—well and good; use it. If the key does not fit, does not make sense, reject it for that prophecy.

An important key to unlocking several “time” prophecies is found in Ezekiel 4:6: “a day for each year.” Some “time” prophecies, indeed, must be taken literally, such as Jeremiah’s prophecy of the 70-year captivity. The 70-week prophecy, on the other hand, simply was not fulfilled—if a literal interpretation is forced. But take it figuratively, as most believers do, apply the day-for-a-year rule, and it becomes one of the most powerful prophecies of Scripture. (See Daniel 9 for both prophecies.)

### A Question of the Heart

Many today are looking for the future literal fulfillment of prophecies that have *already* been fulfilled—figuratively. They seem to be like the woman at the well, who had a hard time grasping that Jesus was *not* talking about literal water. They do not comprehend that the same Jesus who is spiritually a door, spiritually a shepherd, and spiritually a lamb, is also spiritually a king. They do not comprehend that the same people who are spiritually the body of Christ, spiritually the family of God, and spiritually the temple of God, are also spiritually the kingdom of God.

Attitude may be involved. Willingness to believe Jesus’ word may be involved. What did Jesus say? “For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John. And **if you are willing to receive it**, he is Elijah who is to come.” (Matthew 11:13-15). *If we are willing to receive it*, many prophecies receive their true fulfillment figuratively.

Literal or figurative? It all depends. Clearly some prophecies should be interpreted literally. Just as clearly, other prophecies should be interpreted figuratively. One should not have a prejudice for either the literal or the figurative. It is not an “either-or” matter. The student of God’s Word must have an open mind and a willing heart to accept what the evidence shows in each case. □

### Answers to:

### BIBLE QUESTIONS

1. Genesis 9:18,19; 2. Genesis 17:24; 3. Genesis 19:30-38;
4. (1) First 40 years in Egypt; (2) Second 40 years in exile in the wilderness; (3) Last 40 years in the wilderness journey (Acts 7:20-23; 7:29,30; 7:36; Deuteronomy 34:7); 5. Saul, David, and Solomon; 6. *The Salt Sea*—Genesis 14:3; Deuteronomy 3:17; *The Sea of the Plain*—Joshua 3:16; *The East Sea*—Ezekiel 47:18; Joel 2:20; 7. *The Great Sea*—Numbers 34:6; Joshua 1:4; Ezekiel 47:10; *The Uttermost Sea*—Deuteronomy 11:24; 34:2; Joel 2:20; *The Sea of the Philistines*—Exodus 23:31; *The Sea of Joppa*—Ezra 3:7; 8. *Sea of Chinnereth (Chinneroth)*—Numbers 34:11; Joshua 13:27; Joshua 12:3; *Lake of Gennesaret*—Luke 5:1; *Sea of Tiberias*—John 6:1; 9. I Kings 19:1-8; 10. Proverbs 22:24; 11. Proverbs 30:8,9; 12. Matthew 4:5; 27:53; 13. Luke 3:21-23; 14. Mark 16:9; 15. John 20:1-4; 16. Acts 1:3; 17. Acts 6:8; 18. Acts 6:15; 19. Acts 27:21-26,37,44; 20. I Corinthians 1:11; 7:1; 16:17,18. □

# So Stupid It's Hilarious

**T**HE PRACTICE of sin and wrongdoing is very foolish. There is nothing smart about it. The wages of sin is death (Romans 6:23). A Day of Judgment is coming. The book of Proverbs goes a step further and calls sinners fools. Yes, sinners are foolish, but again some of them are downright stupid. We are not speaking self-righteously, because "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23), but following are some reported cases that not only are dumb, but are so stupid they are hilarious.

Earlier this year we read in the *Winston-Salem Journal* of a fellow who was planning to rob a bank in North Carolina. He got in a teller line like everyone else, but with a ski mask on. He was waiting his turn, and then he was going to rob the bank. Needless to say, he wasn't successful.

A man in Mt. Airy, North Carolina, recently, who was being served a warrant on an unrelated charge, bragged about how much marijuana he had and could get. He asked the officers if they would like to smoke a joint (marijuana cigarette) with him. The officers said, "He laid a rolling paper on the floor and cut a hole in the side of his sock, shook marijuana out of his sock and rolled up a joint." He bragged about having more marijuana and drew a map showing where he had a crop growing. He was arrested, needless to say, not only on the basis of the original warrant, but on drug charges also.

In Portsmouth, Rhode Island, after a string of vending machine robberies in January, a man was arrested when police found him loitering around a vending machine. Later he tried to post his \$400 bail in quarters. Hmmmmm?

A young woman was arrested in Lake City, Florida, for robbery of a Howard Johnson's motel. She was armed with only an electric chain saw, which was not plugged in.

The *Ann Arbor News* crime column reported that a man walked into a Burger King in Ypsilanti, Michigan, at 7:50 a.m., flashed a gun and demanded cash. The clerk turned him down because he said he couldn't open the cash register without a food order. When the man ordered onion rings, the clerk said they weren't available for breakfast. The man, frustrated, walked away.

A man was arrested in Providence, Rhode Island, after allegedly knocking out an armored car driver and stealing the closest four bags of money. It turned out they contained \$800 in PENNIES, weighed 30 pounds each, and slowed him to a stagger during his getaway so that police officers easily jumped him from behind.

The Belgium news agency Belga reported in November that a man suspected of robbing a jewelry store in Liege said he couldn't have done it because he was busy breaking into a school at the same time. Police then arrested him for breaking into the school.

A drug-possession defendant on trial in March in Pontiac, Michigan, said he had been searched without a warrant. The prosecutor said the officer didn't need a warrant because a "bulge" in the man's jacket could have been a gun. Nonsense, said the man, who happened to be wearing the same jacket that day in court. He handed it over so the judge could see it. The judge discovered a packet of cocaine in the pocket and laughed so hard he required a five-minute recess of court to compose himself.

We laugh. We might even say, "How stupid can you get?" But we can't be too self-righteous because the Bible says that "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). The apostle Paul further stated, "For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another" (Titus 3:3). Yes, sinning is foolish and downright stupid. All have been deceived and done pretty dumb things at one time or another. Humility is always in order.

NOTE: We add the following. It is not hilarious or funny; only stupid and tragic.

According to an AP news release, a man and woman (we withhold their names) were driving along a highway in Andover Township (Andover, New Jersey) earlier this week (first of October) when they decided it might be fun to light a stick of dynamite and toss it out the window.

Maybe it was the drinks they had earlier that made the couple a little fuzzy, but the man lit the dynamite and tossed it.

He then discovered he had forgotten to roll down the windows.

He is in the hospital in stable condition and his wife has been charged with drunk driving.

Stupid, tragic, but not humorous!—J.E.G.    □

## In Jesus Christ We Find

In Jesus Christ the Lord we find  
Salvation, joy, and peace of mind;  
All that was lost because of sin  
Is ours once more when born again.

—By James E. Gibbons

## In What Sense is...



### Scripture “Fulfilled”?

● By James E. Gibbons

**S**OME PEOPLE seem to have “way out” and fanciful interpretations of Bible prophecy. Outright and by implication, these interpretations would contradict Bible truths elsewhere spoken in everyday language. When we won’t “go along” with these interpretations, the accusation is made that we are “spiritualizing” prophecy; that we are not taking it literally (that all prophecy is fulfilled literally). These charges many times are made by the premillennial dispensationalists. What do we have to say about this?

We need not be an “authority” on every aspect of prophecy to know that we are on the right track if we look at things in the way the apostles did. Time and time again in the New Testament Scriptures, looking back, the apostles and writers speak of Scriptures being “fulfilled.” What did they mean by “fulfilled”? In what sense is Scripture “fulfilled”? What was the apostles’ hermeneutics in understanding prophecy? They spoke and wrote by divine authority and the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and their hermeneutical application cannot be disregarded. It is what God meant.

The 2nd chapter of the gospel of Matthew is a good place to look to see various ways that Scripture is fulfilled.

**(1) Direct or Literal Fulfillment.** The wise men came from the east wanting to know where to find the Christ child. Troubled Herod consulted the chief priests and scribes, after which we read, “And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judea: for *thus it is*

*written* by the prophet, And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel” (Matthew 2:5,6).

The exact words are found in Micah 5:2 with the additional comment, “whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.” This clearly has reference to the coming of God incarnate. Christ would be born in Bethlehem of Judea. The fulfillment was direct and literal, the way that people commonly think of Scripture being fulfilled. And there are many such direct and wonderful prophecies in the Word of God. But this is not the only way that Scripture is fulfilled.

**(2) Typical, Having a Basic Meaning and An Extended Prophetic Fulfillment.** Because of the danger to the Christ child poised by the wicked Herod, Joseph was warned by an angel in a dream. Then we read, “When he arose, he took the young child and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt: And was there until the death of Herod: that it might be *fulfilled* which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Out of Egypt have I called my son” (Matthew 2:14,15).

This points back to Hosea 11:1 and Exodus 4:22. The Hosea reference reads, “When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt.” It is talking about the nation of Israel, but how can it apply to Christ? The nation of Israel was a type of Christ. It is what we call a typological fulfillment. Looking back now, many people, places, and things in the Old Testament are clearly seen with an enlarged significance. Through foreknowledge it was the Divine design that these be prophetic types and point to eternal realities and applications in the New Testament.

**(3) Words Describing One Event Describe Another—An Analogical Fulfillment.** When wicked Herod had the babies killed in Bethlehem following the birth of Jesus, “Then was *fulfilled* that which was spoken by Jeremy [Jeremiah] the prophet, saying, In Rama was there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not” (Matthew 2:17,18).

Matthew calls this a fulfillment of what we read in Jeremiah 31:15, with Genesis 37 perhaps as part of a backdrop, picturing Rachel weeping for her children. Obviously this is not a direct prophecy, nor does it seem to be a type. In what sense then were the words spoken by Jeremiah “fulfilled”? It was from Ramah that Jeremiah saw

(Continued on Next Page)

## In What Sense is Scripture “Fulfilled”? *(Continued from Page 13)*

the people taken away into Babylonian Captivity when he was released (Jeremiah 39:11,12; 40:1; 31:15). There was weeping and mourning as this took place, even as “Rachel weeping for her children.” The words describing the first event in what Jeremiah saw and heard fittingly describe the second (the lamentation in connection with the death of the babies in Bethlehem); they are very similar. The Scripture was fulfilled, not as direct prophecy, but as an illustration of a like tragic and distressful situation. The meaning of words are fulfilled, not a prediction.

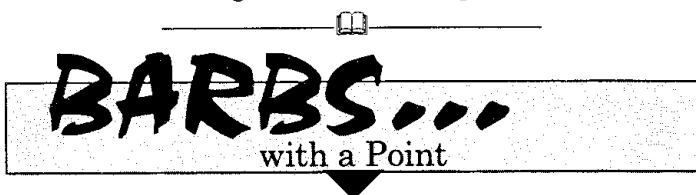
**(4) Fulfillment in a General Sense.** We read in Matthew 2:23, “And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth: that it might be *fulfilled* which was spoken by the prophets, He shall be called a Nazarene.” These words refer to when Joseph and Mary came back from Egypt with the Christ child. When they learned that one of the Herod family who was also notorious was on the throne, they went on to live in Nazareth of Galilee. Their doing this, and consequently Jesus being called a “Nazarene,” is spoken of as Scripture being “fulfilled.” A search of the Old Testament will not find such a reference.

Thus, this is understood in a general sense as Matthew speaks of “the prophets.” Some see a tie in with Isaiah 11:1, “And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots.” Isaiah 53:2 reads, “For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him.” A “Nazarene” perhaps speaks of the lowly circumstances of his background. The question is asked in John 1:46, “Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?”

So, in this case the Scripture was fulfilled more in the general sense of the spirit of what the prophets said about the lowly background of Jesus the Christ (rather than in a specific prediction).

**YES**, it is an interesting study to look up all references to Scripture being fulfilled in the New Testament or the quotation of the said Old Testament Scripture in the New Testament and its application. When doing this, keep the 2nd chapter of Matthew in mind as sort of a key to the use of the word “fulfill.” It is not always a literal fulfillment, but such use as the Holy Spirit made of the word. Looking back, prophecy written in the context of

the Old Testament usually bears the image and flavor of the Old Testament even when it is talking about things to come in the New Testament age. Many of the Jews missed out because they could not and would not harmonize their literal, and many times wooden, interpretations with what Christ and the apostles taught. It turned out that Christ’s mission in coming to earth was a spiritual one. □



**IF YOU TRIM** yourself to fit everybody, there soon will not be much of you left.

*A fool’s anger is soon known.*

Unless we believe that our message is unique we will not be different from the world, nor will we evangelize.

*The “self-made” man many times worships his maker.*

If you put an exclamation mark after everything that you say, how will people know when you really want to make a point?

*Stumbling blocks are not good material with which to build a church.*

Homosexuals do not produce their kind by act of reproduction, for God only made male and female; they produce their kind by act of molestation.

*Modern man needs to realize that speed is meaningless without direction.*

The Word of God is the seed of the kingdom and does not produce denominational tares and hybrids; consequently Jesus said, “Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up” (Matthew 15:13).

*When you get where you are going, where will you be when you get there?*

Some of the most sectarian people in the world religiously are those who are sectarian with that which they dogmatically, arrogantly and self-righteously believe to be the truth.

*The waters of baptism cannot put out the flames of hell if we have never repented.*

We never cease to be amazed at how fast churches can compromise and fall away from the simple New Testament position when, even for a short time, the Word of God is not preached in its fullness.

*Some people all wrapped up in clothes, when they follow the style, have a very small wrap.*

*(Continued on Next Page, Col. 2)*

## Spiritual Food for Thought

By Andrew Gibbons

### SERENITY



#### OLD AGE

Old age is a privilege.

You cannot buy it.

You cannot sell it.

You cannot earn it.

You cannot inherit it.

You cannot merit it.

So if you are fortunate enough to have it,

For heaven's sake enjoy it;

And don't complain about it.

Remember, if you were not old, you would be dead.

—Edna Long

**SOME PEOPLE** grow up with the Lord by way of their parents. While some continue with the Lord after they leave home, others seem to go their own way, forgetting the things they once seemed to have learned. Later in life when life seems not to have much meaning, some do return to the Lord.

But others wait even longer. It seems the thought of sickness and death bring some to their senses, but to no avail for it is short lived. Once recovery is made, the death bed commitment is soon forgotten, just like the foxhole commitments in times of war.

Growing old is a part of life. May the Lord God Almighty be a part of the mature years as well as the not so mature years.

Psalms 27:1, *"The Lord is my light and my salvation; Whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life; Of whom shall I be afraid?"*

Psalms 90:12, *"So teach us to number our days, that we may gain a heart of wisdom."* □

Our undivided allegiance must be only to the religious movement that we read about in the book of Acts, and not to any religious movements by uninspired men (regardless what we may call the movement), if we are ever going to get back to the church of the New Testament.

*Most professed Christians have swallowed the Christmas package hook, line, and sinker.*

The most snobbish people are those who once had nothing and now have, imagine that they have, or pretend that they have something as they condescend to look down their nose at others they regard as being inferior to them, thus foolishly venting their insecurities.

*Being down on people all of the time is no way to build them up.*

The making of intoxicating drinks is a decay process in the fermentation and breaking down of the different components (grain, grapes, etc.) involved, and the effect of drinking the byproduct of this decay is likewise a breaking down (morally and physically), producing decay in society.

*You can kick a dead dog all that you want to, but he is not going to get up and move.* □

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## IBM Extends Benefits to Partners of Gays\*

NEW YORK—IBM has become the nation's biggest company to extend health benefits to the partners of its gay workers, a move that follows a growing trend in corporate America.

The decision could encourage even more companies to do the same: IBM is so large and diverse, it is viewed by many as a bellwether of U.S. business practices. "Having a company like IBM on board is going to shake a lot more of them out of the trees," said Liz Winfield, co-founder of Common Ground, a Natick, Mass., research firm.

IBM on Thursday joined nearly 470 other large corporations, governments and universities in the United States that provide the same benefits to same-sex couples as to married couples. That's up from 250 a year ago, according to Common Ground.

—*The Daily News, Bowling Green, KY 9-20-96*

[\*Or, Sodom and Gomorrah, Here We Come!—Editor]

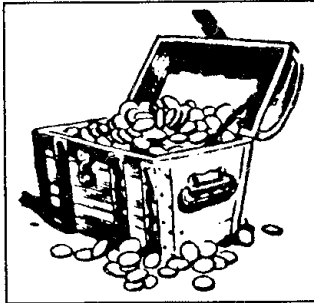
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## Marriage Counseling

A **PREACHER** was asked if he gave marriage counseling. His reply was, "Yes, every Sunday morning at 11:00 o'clock." □

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MANY who love the Word of God have discovered Treasure much to their liking when they obtained the bound volumes of *The Sword and Staff*. If you like this current issue, you will likewise be thrilled with the back copies in book form. Notice those still available (while they are still available), and place your order now for good reading. Make them part of your library *and part of your life*. You will be glad that you did.



**If Money Talked**

If money talked, what would it say?  
Serve me, and I will be your pay;  
There's nothing money cannot buy;  
So let your heart aspire and sigh.

Become my slave by day and night;  
I'll make you cheat and steal and fight;  
To get ahead, that is your goal;  
Just reach and grasp to get it all.

And more than that, I'll be your god;  
But this may seem a little odd  
For one that's short in deity;  
But that is what you've made of me.

—By James E. Gibbons

**WHEN YOU MOVE, ALWAYS SEND YOUR OLD ADDRESS ALONG WITH YOUR NEW ADDRESS.**

(CLIP AND MAIL\OR WRITE)

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Enclosed find my contribution. Please put me on the mailing list of *The Sword and Staff*. ☐ New ☐ Renew

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By James E. Gibbons

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**Not on Speaking Terms**

A VISITOR leaned on the fence as he watched the old farmer plowing with his mule. After a while the visitor said, "I'm not telling you what to do, but it looks to me like you could save yourself a lot of work simply by saying 'Gee' and 'Haw' instead of having to pull on the lines all of the time."

The old farmer pulled a big handkerchief from his pocket and wiped his face. Then he said, "Reckon you're right, but that mule kicked me five years ago, and I ain't spoke to him since."

The moral of the story: A grudge is harder on the one who holds it than the one it is held against. ☐

—Adapted

● **HELP US REACH OUT TO MORE PEOPLE AND CHURCHES WITH THIS PUBLICATION. Thanks!**

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